

North Central Iowa PY21 WIOA Annual Report Narrative

Executive Summary

Program Year 2021 (PY21) was a year of progress for the North Central Iowa Local Workforce Development Area. The Iowa **WORKS** office in Fort Dodge was once again open to serve customers as the country began to regain normalcy after the onset of the pandemic. Safety measures were put in place to ensure a healthy environment was maintained for staff and customers. Virtual services continued to be made available- an effort that continues to provide more accessibility to services for customers who are unable to come to the center in person.

Significant work was completed to further achieve compliance with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). The year began with a newly minted Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the North Central Iowa Workforce Development Board (NCIWDB), the Iowa **WORKS** system partners and the Chief Lead Elected Official (CLEO). The MOU represents a combined total of 22 partners and programs. The local area also successfully completed a new local plan, which was approved near the end of the program year.

The One-Stop Operator (OSO), procured in PY20, implemented new processes for reporting core partner activities to the NCIWDB and began work to identify opportunities for collaborative activities among partners to provide seamless services. The OSO and partners will continue to strengthen partnerships and better align all program services through PY22.

Local Workforce Development Area System

The North Central Iowa Local Workforce Development Area consists of Calhoun, Hamilton, Humboldt, Pocahontas, Webster, and Wright counties.

The North Central Iowa Local Workforce Development Area is made up of one comprehensive center located in Fort Dodge. Title I, III and IV are co-located at the center in Fort Dodge. Title II is not currently co-located; however, the program maintains a presence and a real-time virtual connection for customers to meet with staff.

LWDA Strategic Objectives

Northwest Iowa LWDA Strategic Objectives:

- The area's employers will have access to advanced, skilled, diverse, and Future Ready workers.
- All Iowans in the area will be provided access to a continuum of high-quality education, training, and career opportunities.

- The area's one-stop delivery system will align all programs and services in an accessible, seamless, and integrated manner.
- Increase outreach to target the entire North Central Iowa Local Area. Outreach efforts will focus on establishing relationships with employers, penetrating multiple industries and sectors.
- Create long term engagement through quality services and providing skilled workers with low turnover.
- Meet the workforce needs of local businesses.
- Align with the governor's Future Ready Iowa initiative to connect Iowans to education and training for good paying jobs and careers to improve people's lives.
- Strengthen programs by updating policies and procedures to continue to meet the needs of the North Central Local area.
- Monitor performance on a regular basis to ensure positive performance outcomes.
- Attaining 70% of Iowans with education and training beyond high school by 2025. Education and training will consist of credential attainment, measurable skills gains, ultimately reaching long-term unsubsidized employment.

COVID-19 Pandemic Response

Employment Service activities resumed as normal beginning 6/1/2021, with one-on-one service provision starting in July 2021. Although services were available, the number of individuals seeking services was diminished given COVID concerns. Services have been adapted to assist with reaching individuals in more remote locations and provide ease of access using technology. Iowa**WORKS** has updated all workshops to be provided virtually, with the option of coming to the centers to access them through our computers as a group. Appointments are also being offered virtually.

Adult Education and Literacy Title II programs secured devices to be made available for check-out by students participating in online options and to support additional learning outside of the classroom. The devices include all the additional items to support an online environment that are conducive to learning such as a mouse, headphones, bags. A limited number of hotspot devices have also been secured for check-out by students who do not have Wi-Fi access.

In response to the pandemic, Title II now has options available for online courses. Courses are available for the High School Equivalency Diploma program, English as a Second Language, and Literacy.

In creating online course options, a need for Digital Literacy skills was identified. Title II Adult Education has purchased and implementing training in the North Star Digital Literacy platform. Courses will be offered face to face, online, and in blended learning environments based off the needs of the student. Partnerships at the One Stop center are being developed to provide additional access options for students/clients that want to access services at the One Stop.

IVRS staff returned to the office and are providing services at our office locations, in schools, and in other community settings. COVID provided the opportunity to focus on new efficiencies. A highlight was acceleration of the timeline to adopt a “paperless” agency work model.

In PY20, the NCIWDB was awarded funding through the Covid-19 Employment Recovery National Dislocated Worker Grant. The Title I Service Provider continues to provide services through the second year of the lifecycle of the grant.

Sector Strategies

Specific Strategies for PY21 have been geared toward redeveloping relationships with area employers and connecting with Iowans to let them know of available services.

An Iowa**WORKS** monthly newsletter was established in PY21. This publication is sent to over 200 community agency members who directly connect with individuals served.

Iowa**WORKS** Roundtables were held from October – December 2021. Roundtables were followed by Workforce Assessments that were conducted by teams made up of Iowa**WORKS** (Title III), STEM, Community College, and Economic Development representatives. The intent was to meet with employers and find out about business needs and operations. Data was collected and the team strategized with additional partners such as Title I, Title II, and Title IV to develop recommendations to meet the needs that employers expressed.

North Central Iowa conducted 10 of the 74 assessments completed across the state, which included assessments for Citizens Community Credit Union, CJ Bio America, Professional Computer Solutions, Liguria, POET, AAI-Spalding, Essential Proteins, Pella, Smithfield, and Wesco.

Business Services & Employer Engagement

IVRS made connections with employers throughout the year with focus on arranging tours, speakers, and job shadows for youth and learning about careers to provide information to job candidates along with direct placement activities.

The Title II Adult Education program partnered with a company called Complete AgriServices to serve the employees at Prestage Foods. Employees who are working to improve their English skills were able to participate in classes held at the Eagle Grove Career Academy. Continued conversations with the company are happening to ensure that there are flexible options that work for the schedule of their employees.

The Title II Adult Education program also partnered with WG Provisions in Jewell, Iowa, to offer on-site English as a Second Language classes to employees. A customized course was put together with input from the employer with identified skills, vocabulary and concepts that support their successful growth as an employee with their company.

In late February 2022 Iowa**WORKS** developed a relationship with DesiRae Donlan and Suzy Schares who were in the beginning stages of opening a Pet Supplies Plus store in Fort Dodge. They expressed the need to hire a staff of 30+ over the next four months and we collectively began to develop a marketing plan to fill the positions. Two hiring events were held at the Fort Dodge Iowa**WORKS** center in which over 25 applicants attended and completed employment applications. They also participated in one of our virtual Brazen events. The positions were posted on Iowa**WORKS**.GOV, flyers were distributed throughout town, and several social media posts were made to promote the openings. In the days following the hiring events, with the support and participation of the entire Iowa**WORKS** staff, job seekers received assistance filling out paper applications and qualified applicants were referred to the business. On July 6 an email from the PSP team arrived, thanking Iowa**WORKS** for helping get the new store fully staffed before the opening!

Career Fairs

- Statewide Virtual Job Fair 3/24/22
- Careers In Public Service Virtual Job Fair 6/30/22
- Careers in Transportation Virtual Job Fair 4/26/22

Open Interview Events

- The Iowa**WORKS** office had more than 30 open interview events during PY21 with employers such as Harbor Freight, Aluma Trailers, Pet Supplies Plus, YohnCo, QPS, BHJ, Midwest Fence & Gate, Prestage Foods, Tyson, Bobalee Hydraulics, Daybreak Foods, USPS, Hog Slat and Blattner Energy.
- The Iowa**WORKS** center also created a "Job Fair Friday" to bring in multiple employers and provide opportunities for job seekers. There were 10 events held from November 2021 through February 2022.

Events

- 3/4/22 Presented to the Humboldt High iJAG classes to demonstrate what "NOT" to do at a job interview!

- 4/5/22 Iowa**WORKS** attended the Humboldt High School Job Shadow Classes and presented our Interview Skit for what “not” to do in an interview!



- 5/3/2022 Iowa Central Community College held their annual Career on Wheels event.



Fort Dodge Iowa**WORKS** and Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services staff assisted with this event. Students from St. Paul Lutheran School, St. Edmond Catholic School, Southeast Valley



Middle School and Paton-Churdan Schools were able to visit with local businesses to see how their vehicles help contribute to their work. Dozens of employers showcased vehicles, from an ambulance and firetruck, to a food truck and a limousine, to cranes and a Military Humvee plus many more! It was a fun day for all who participated!

- 5/23/22 Iowa**WORKS** hosted an Ignite Entrepreneurs Series - Smart Start Workshop that included a speaker the Small Business Development Center.
- 5/26/22 Iowa**WORKS** assisted Iowa Central Community College in showing some Southeast Valley students on what not to do in an interview and presented a training on “Appearance” and its importance. They also took a tour of our office to see what it is we do and how we assist job seekers.



- 6/9/22 Title I staff and youth participants toured C & S Products in Fort Dodge as part of the Unlock Your Inner Professional workplace readiness program for youth ages 14-24.



- 7/14/22 Iowa**WORKS** held a Drive-Thru Job Fair which had approximately 40 vehicles drive thru and received information on job leads from 36 area employers. Area employers were also present to help hand out packets and great job seekers. Left over packets were distributed within the community at shelters, libraries, and the Fort Dodge Housing Authority.



Chad Pierce joined the Iowa**WORKS** staff to serve as the Business Marketing Specialist for North Central Iowa in May 2021. He greatly enhanced the presence and awareness of business services in the community. Chad made major contributions to the Iowa**WORKS** social media presence, resulting in a measurable increase in the center's foot traffic. He also met with and developed working relationships with the Economic Developers in all the counties served. He built up the ECI (Employers Council of Iowa) – North Central Board, recruiting Economic Developer Dawn Larson from City of Fort Dodge to serve as ECI co-chair.

Program Highlights & Innovation

Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, & Youth

Two Title I Youth participants were employed through Work Experience Programs (WEP) during PY21. One participant was hired at the end of his WEP and continues to be employed with the business. One completed a WEP with a substance abuse agency and because of this experience was able to become employed with an adolescent substance abuse program in Fort Dodge. Both participants are contemplating continuing with post-secondary education, which will likely result in an increase to their current salaries.

One Adult participant completed On the Job Training (OJT) and has continued employment with the company. Ten Occupational Skills Training (OST) participants in Title I programs earned a credential during PY21.

In June 2021, the Youth program presented a weeklong leadership and workforce readiness program for youth participants. 4 youth participants completed the workshop series. The workshops consisted of budgeting, customer service skills, interviewing and resume writing, and how to get along with others. In addition, youth toured C & S Products and learned about jobs in manufacturing.

Rapid Response

During PY21 Dunham closed on 1/16/22 affecting 8 staff, Rapid Response efforts were not requested, however they did accept packets of information for employees to know about services. Rapid Response efforts were provided to Bath & Body Works in January 2022 due to business closing on 1/27/22 affecting 12 workers, informational packets were provided. North Central Area provided Rapid Response efforts to Eagles Catch and informational packets were provided to employees, their last day was 6/24/22.

Registered Apprenticeship

The 2021 Virtual Registered Apprenticeship Social Media Blitz was completed during Registered Apprenticeship Week. No additional apprenticeships were created.

Registered Apprenticeship and Offender Re-Entry Success Story

Mitchell was incarcerated for 7 years. He spent some time at Fort Dodge Correctional Facility where he was the barber and accrued quite a few hours. After he transferred to the North Central Correctional Facility the Re-Entry Career Planner, Brian Pibal, put him through the barber apprenticeship where he took all of his exams. After Mitchell was released, he still had to pass two more State of Iowa barbering exams. Dane Sulentic, the statewide apprenticeship coordinator for the Iowa Department of Corrections, worked with Mitchell to get through the process of those last two exams. Mitchell now owns his own barbershop in Urbandale.

<https://www.thegazette.com/state-government/iowa-prison-barbering-apprenticeship-leads-to-new-business/>

Offender Re-Entry

During the PY21 year, there were over 25 job fairs held to connect incarcerated individuals with job opportunities that could provide a second chance upon release. Some of these companies were Plastic Product, John Deere, Burke, WG Provisions, Frontier Co-Op, Whirlpool, AGC (Association of General Contractors), Tension Envelope, PDM, Hy-Vee, Revere Plastics, United Way, Masterson Personnel, LaQuercia Meats, Tyson, Mestek Machinery and SSW Technologies.

National Career Readiness assessments were given on a monthly basis, along with POET workshops (Providing Opportunities for Ex-Offenders to Succeed) to provide direction for success with employment after release and to reduce recidivism.

Re-Entry Career Planners and additional staff went through Offender Workforce Development Specialist-Instructor (OWDS-I) training. They became certified to teach the curriculum to future OWDS participants. Training was vigorous and took place from April 2022 and will conclude December 2022.

Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation (IVRS/Title IV) met with the 2nd Judicial District and has an IVRS counselor serve on the Drug Treatment Court team. IVRS is able to provide information on partner services that participants may benefit from.

Offender Re-Entry Success Story

Johnny

Johnny was released to a halfway house after being incarcerated for 14 years. While he was in the Anamosa prison, he began working for Iowa Prison Industries in the print shop. While he enjoyed the work, he realized when the time came for his release, he would like to be self-employed and work from home. He came up with a plan and spoke with the supervisor in the braille shop but was told there were no openings. Johnny knew this was the perfect career for him and was persistent in talking with the supervisor. Johnny was eventually accepted and began training as a braille transcriptionist. The training was for the most part self-taught. He was given the materials to study and worked at his own pace. In 2012, he earned his first certification from the Library of Congress in Literacy, which allowed him to perform the work

given to him through IPI. His next step was to learn Unified English Braille. At the time, there was no U.S. certification in this, so his supervisor worked to get Johnny and some of the other inmates in the shop certified through Canada, making him one of the first people in the United States to have this type of certification. His next certification was in math, which he stated was one of the more difficult certifications to attain. He wanted to attain this certification because it would allow him to earn more money, due to the complexity. His most recent certification is in formatting. He was later transferred to the prison in Fort Dodge, where there were only four people in the braille shop, then once again transferred to minimum security in Rockwell City, where IPI does not have a braille shop. Iowa Prison Industries agreed to set him up in a warehouse by himself to work. Johnny was not only transcribing braille for clients, but also proofreading the work of other inmates performing similar work in other correctional facilities. Johnny knew that to be successful when he was released, he would need to save his money to purchase necessary items, so he was frugal and saved his small hourly wage. He met Iowa**WORKS** Re-Entry advisor Brian Pibal and laid out his plan. Brian assisted him with creating an email account and reaching out to potential clients for work. When the day came for his release to the halfway house in Fort Dodge, Pibal also assisted Johnny with finding a location to continue working. He met with IPI and made a phone call to Fort Dodge Iowa**WORKS** operations manager Faith Miller, and it was decided to allow Johnny to use a vacant cubicle in the office. Part of the agreement with IPI was he needed to continue working for them until he paid off the equipment they were giving him, and he would have to reach out to clients to secure his own work. Within weeks, he fulfilled this obligation and was actually having to turn down some work. He is currently making approximately \$300 a day performing basic transcription and can earn \$500 a day doing math transcription. It was a big adjustment for him when he was released to the halfway house. Technology had changed tremendously since he first became incarcerated, and Iowa**WORKS** staff assisted him with learning how to use a cell phone, access the internet and use WiFi. Johnny said he could never could have done any of this without the help of everyone involved.

Serving Job Seekers with Disabilities

In PY21, IVRS served 315 job candidates in North Central Iowa.

- 138 were under the age of 25

IVRS served an additional 205 potentially eligible students.

North Central Iowa had 52 successful closures with participants successfully maintaining employment.

- Average hours worked: 29
- Average hourly wage: \$13.02

Title IV continues to provide individualized services that are flexible to the needs of job candidates with disabilities. Staff work with all area high schools to provide pre-employment

transition services and transition services for students with disabilities. Contracts are maintained throughout the area with Iowa Central Community College (Pre-ETS Coordinator Position) and with Fort Dodge School District (Transition Alliance Program) that help increase capacity in the schools and assist in meeting the agency goal of spending 15% of budget on Pre-ETS services. The program partners with area CRPs to provide supported employment services for those with the most significant disabilities.

Veteran Services

A Veteran Appreciation Event was held on 11/12/21 to connect to area veterans and let them know of services. Career Planners on site greeted veterans, explain services and introduced them to DVOP – Heather Warren who came down from the Spencer office to participate. Veterans were also introduced to the county Veteran Service Officers (VSOs) that were invited and attended. Veterans were recruited to attend from those that had registered in the Iowa**WORKS** system, flyers were posted throughout the community (VA clinic, post office, businesses), and through the VSOs. There will be door prizes given every 15 minutes to those in attendance. Prizes and baked goods were donated by staff. Approximately 10 veterans attended that enjoyed the refreshments, each leaving with a prize and information about our services!

On 12/10/21, Jeremy Frisbey was hired to serve as the North Central Iowa**WORKS** Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) Veteran Career Planner position that had been vacant since August 2021. While the North Central DVOP position was vacant, Heather Warren, the DVOP from the Northwest Iowa**WORKS** center provided services in North Central Iowa. During PY21 Jeremy reached out to various Iowa non-profit agencies to get the word out about Home Base Iowa (HBI) and Iowa**WORKS** Veteran services to encourage veterans to come into the office to learn about Iowa**WORKS** services. He attended a community outreach meeting that consisted of 15 local leaders to learn about what they do and how they help provide services, making connections and introducing himself. Jeremy personally met with each county Veterans Service Officer (VSO), which includes Calhoun, Hamilton, Humboldt, Pocahontas, Webster and Wright.

In addition to his community connections, Jeremy is worked to establish a "Coffee and Camaraderie" Group for the North Central Workforce Development Area that is held on a monthly basis. The purpose is for veterans to meet and learn of services available to them while being able to have an open forum to speak freely and provide ways to assist each other through networking. The first event was held on April 9th at the Fort Dodge VFW.

A Women's Veterans Day Event was held at Iowa**WORKS** on 6/9/2022 Heather Geerdes spoke about her time in service with the other 13 people in attendance. All of those in attendance were able to talk and discuss their time in the service and needs.

On 6/25/2022 a Veterans BBQ event was held to honor veterans and their families. Lunch, family friendly activities and opportunities to meet resource agencies in the LWDA were all

provided free of charge. This was a coordinated effort from the City of Fort Dodge Economic Developer, VSOs, Iowa**WORKS** Business Service Team, Fort Dodge Convention & Visitors Bureau, Fort Dodge Police Department, Fort Dodge Fire Department, Iowa National Guard, VFW, and Veterans Council, Marine Corp League and many sponsors. The event was a resounding success with over 100 people attending. At the event, the park was rededicated to a local veteran who had the idea to create the park. The idea started with a piece of paper and came to fruition with the backing of private and public partnerships. Nine different community agencies and organizations attended the event: Human Services, Upper Des Moines, Freedom Pointe, VA Total Health, CFI, Iowa**WORKS**, FAVA, Community Health Center Fort Dodge, and the VA Suicide Prevention representative.

<https://www.messengernews.net/news/local-news/2022/06/veterans-barbecue-draws-dozens/>

Veteran Success Stories

Brian

Brian, a Navy Veteran, has utilized Iowa**WORKS** services throughout the years so he knew right were to go when needing assistance. January 11th, Brian came into the office seeking part-time employment that would fit within his abilities with physical limitations. After meeting with Brian, center staff connected him to the Disabled Veteran Outreach Program and Ticket to Work since he was collecting SSDI and low income as had not worked since 2019 due to addressing medical needs.

Brian met with Veteran Career Planner, Jeremy, the day he initially came to the office and they reviewed his goals for employment and limitations that needed considered. Brian expressed that he was interested in driving a forklift or truck driving as he had a CDL that he received in April 2017 through the GAP program, but was really open to multiple types of jobs. The next day, Brian came back to the center and went over his resume and setup his virtual recruiter in the Iowa**WORKS** system. On 1/18/22 Brian came back to the office and completed his resume and printed additional to have with him when meeting employers. He applied to several positions and also took the opportunity to meet with Daybreak Foods since they were in the office for a job fair.

Jaci with the Ticket to Work (TTW) program met with Brian on 1/25/22 to discuss SSDI and how employment wages can affect benefits. Brian largest concern was that he did not want to lose his benefits by earning to too much in wages. Jaci explained that the concern is common to many individuals, but that there is a process with Social Security through the Ticket to Work program that is designed to help individuals get back to work in a position that they are able to work without immediately discontinuing benefits. Brian decided that he would enroll in the TTW program with Iowa**WORKS** to take advantage of the additional assistance.

On 2/2/22 Brian called Jeremy in excitement to let him know that after his resume was completed the week before, he started getting calls and had two interviews scheduled. He said "my resume looks so good I might call myself!" The following week Brian came into the center to let staff know that he was offered a position with Beisser Lumber. Then on 2/16/22 Brian called to let staff know he took a position with Mid-Continent Lumber out of Fort Dodge at \$14/hour starting on 2/21/22. Two interviews and two job offers in a little over 4 weeks! We congratulated Brian on his success. As of the end of March, Brian is still working and although he still has limitations, he has an advocate through Ticket to Work to helping with suggestions on accommodations and encouragement as he continues his employment.

Mike

On February 7th, Mike came into the Fort Dodge Iowa **WORKS** office to get some assist with finding employment. Since discovering that Mike served in the military in the National Guard, he met with one-on-one with center staff and was connected to Home Base Iowa and determined eligible for the DVOP Veteran Career Planner individualized services. Jeremy received the referral and assessed Mike's strengths and through discussion and learned that Mike was looking for a position in carpentry as he had just finished his certificate in furniture making. Mike took the opportunity to attend the local Fort Dodge job fair on 2/11/22 to connect to area employers while Jeremy assisted to updated and provide tips on how to improve his resume. Mike then attended the 2/17/22 Create A Great Resume and once his resume was completed, he was actively applying for area positions. Jeremy assisted Mike one step further by going over his interview skills to give him a competitive! Through job referrals and Jeremy contacting employers to encourage them to consider Mike for an interview, Mike was hired with Chantland in Humboldt starting on 3/7/22. In 4 short weeks, Mike came in looking for work and walked out with a job!

Billie

Billie, an eligible spouse, called Jeremy in the month of January and said she was looking for a new position since she was not working at the Wild Rose Casino anymore in the marketing department. After the intake, Jeremy helped with fine tuning her resume to help be a more marketable candidate. Since she has an extensive background in marketing she applied to jobs at Prairie Meadows and other places to no avail. Jeremy then assisted her in further tailoring her resume to a specific job posting. In June she got an interview with PDM out of Boone, IA. She then contacted Jeremy on helping with interview prep before her interview. After a couple of interviews she was hired and had to pass a background check. She was worried about some prescriptions that would come up on a drug test. She then consulted with Jeremy, who then consulted with Stacy Thompson on the best course of action, and they decided that when asked she will explain why she takes it and that it would not affect her work performance. Needless to say, the Employee Handbook was re-written to bring her on and Billie started June 25th.

Tim

Tim, an Army veteran, contacted Jeremy via phone and asked him about security jobs in the area since he just retired from the Fort Dodge Correctional Facility and wanted to find some part time work to help save up for when he officially retires later on. Jeremy then helped him with his resume and got him in contact with a couple places that are looking for security professionals. Jeremy sent him the flyer for the TSA hiring event in Des Moines. He then applied, got referred, passed the background check, and got hired in May.

Shawn

Shawn, an Army veteran, was referred to Jeremy by the Fort Dodge Housing agency. Shawn is disabled and can only work part time due to an accident. He came into the Iowa**WORKS** office on April 25th with Jeremy and they went over an IEP on how he can get back to work. After discussing some different options they both decided that he would be able to become a shuttle driver. After working with the Fort Dodge Housing Authority on his resume, Shawn applied to the local Ford dealership as a shuttle driver. He interviewed and received a job offer in which he accepted at \$14/hr starting out working about 20 to 25 hours a week. After he gets his injuries fully rehabbed he will move into more of a full-time role.

Amanda

Amanda, an Army Veteran, called the office asking for the Veterans representative who was not in at the time and was forwarded to the Operations Manager Faith Miller. Amanda stated that she did not have food, money, or a place to live. She has small kids in the home and needed immediate assistance. Faith gave her the resources to help get her through. Once Jeremy came back to the office, Faith relayed the information to him and he immediately called her. Jeremy then set her up with an appointment with the local VSO and Family Alliance for Veterans of America (FAVA). They were able to get her housing and money for food. She was also referred to the VA to get help with her disabilities while the VSO helped her with her benefits claim. Jeremy then followed up and asked her if she had a resume and she stated she did. Amanda then sent him a copy for review. After a few tweaks she applied to multiple office jobs since that is what her doctors will let her perform. While applying for jobs she has applied for SSDI and hopes to get that soon. She had an interview at a local office and she was not hired. Jeremy reached out and asked her how she was doing and she stated that she has problems finding a job. Her next application was to the local YWCA and she then was interviewed. She called Jeremy and spoke with him about it. Jeremy then proceeded to call the Program Manager of the YWCA to champion for her. She was then hired in the month of May and has been very successful there. As of right now she is still in the process of getting SSDI.

Implementation of Priority of Service

Veterans and their spouses are given priority to all services offered in the Iowa**WORKS** Center, which means they are served before other individuals who are seeking services at that time.

When individuals enter the Iowa**WORKS** center they are asked if they have served in the military or if they are the spouse of a service member. Staff are honored to always express gratitude to military members and their families for their service. Special packets of information containing center and Veterans' services are also provided.

Additional Participant Success Stories

Josh

Title II Success Video: Josh the Welder

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lpK8bvkUsAE&feature=youtu.be>



Jo

Jo came into the Fort Dodge Iowa**WORKS** center requesting assistance with her resume and guidance in her career. Jo has had a 32 year career, first as a LPN, then as a Registered Nurse. She recently came to the conclusion that she needed to find a career that was less physically demanding. While visiting the Iowa**WORKS** center she heard about the ICCC Medical Billing & Coding program and asked how she might get a chance to do this. Jo was referred to Melissa Vorrie, was given the application to complete and was informed that she would need to take the NCRC assessment. Jaci assisted Jo with completing the application and registered Jo to take the NCRC. Jo received a Bronze in her assessment this morning, then met with Melissa this afternoon. Jo was very excited to share with me via email that she has been accepted into the program.

Joshua

Follow-up note from Joshua – A previously incarcerated individual:

“Hey Brian, hope you are having a good summer. Just wanted to give you an update on how things are going. Finished my first year at UIOWA. Changed my major from electrical engineering to chemistry, and am specializing in electrochemistry. I have been invited to join one of the labs that is doing research on fuel cell and battery technology, The Leddy Group. They are doing some very cool research and I am excited to join them. I am still working part time at the children’s hospital, and I am wiring a house for my buddy next week. Everything is going pretty good. Hope you and your family are doing well. I will be in touch. Make sure to tell everyone hi for me. Take care”

Phil

Phil Fevold came to Iowa**WORKS** after losing employment due to a tornado that destroyed his work place. We first worked on updating his resume. Phil felt that it might be the right time to try to find something less physical, so we developed a functional resume. Phil was case managed by the Reemployment Case Management (RCM) program. He attended several workshops, and was diligent about applying for jobs. He was very receptive to our suggestions and recommendations. After 2-1/2 months he was made two different job offers and was able to choose the one that was his best fit.



Annual Performance Analysis

A total of 3194 individuals came to the Iowa**WORKS** center and checked in for services. Records show 248,012 individuals received 519,677 Title III services.

- Number of Adult Education Participants in North Central Iowa: 786
- Total number of High School Equivalency Diploma completions: 189
- Total number of students with a measurable skill gain: 279
- Number of Integrated Education and Training (IET) completions: 39

Since 2019, Iowa**WORKS** has provided labor recruitment support to agricultural employers within the North Central and Western Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDA) through the Agricultural Recruitment System (ARS).

Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers (MSFW) have been recruited predominantly from the State of Texas. A large number of MSFWs arrive to work in Iowa from the States of Nebraska and Wisconsin once seasonal work has ended there. Over the past years, Iowa**WORKS** has supported agricultural employers exclusively through the ARS during the harvest season. However, in recent months, agricultural employers have called on ARS to fulfill vacancies over the spring months. Resulting on strengthened relationships among all parties involved.

Amid the 2021 harvest season, Iowa**WORKS** reached out to agricultural employers and MSFW to inquire about interest on seasonal employment during the spring months. A local grain elevator manager asked, “What do (seasonal) workers do when they are not here?” To his surprise, and a precursor to today’s ARS success, the answer was, “They are in other States looking for work”.

Today, Iowa**WORKS** is providing recruitment support through ARS for the spring months as follows:

- Denison Iowa**WORKS**: 5 MSFW
- Fort Dodge Iowa**WORKS**: 5 MSFW
- Sioux City Iowa**WORKS**: 6 MSFW
- Spencer Iowa**WORKS**: 15 MSFW

All effort is made on recruiting locally first. Unfortunately, the interest on seasonal employment is not prevalent among local job seekers coming in local AJCs. What is more, agricultural employers report lacking applicants with interest on agricultural employment in general.

Through the ARS and other initiatives, Iowa**WORKS** and partner agencies provide support to agricultural employers and, thus, help the State of Iowa be a leader on agriculture.

WIOA Title I and Title III Performance Levels

	PY2021	Annual Performance	
North Central Iowa			
Wagner-Peyser			
	Negotiated Rate	90% of Negotiated Rate	Actual Rate
Employment 2nd Qtr	73.0%	65.7%	56.7%
Employment 4th Qtr	70.0%	63.0%	56.0%
Median Earnings 2nd Qtr	\$6,100	\$5,490	\$6,490
Adult			
	Negotiated Rate	90% of Negotiated Rate	Actual Rate
Employment 2nd Qtr	73.0%	65.7%	92.3%
Employment 4th Qtr	70.0%	63.0%	86.7%
Median Earnings 2nd Qtr	\$5,400	\$4,860	\$8,537
Credential Attainment	67.0%	60.3%	53.3%
Measurable Skills Gain	44.0%	39.6%	38.5%
Dislocated Worker			
	Negotiated Rate	90% of Negotiated Rate	Actual Rate
Employment 2nd Qtr	85.0%	76.5%	88.9%
Employment 4th Qtr	83.0%	74.7%	100.0%
Median Earnings 2nd Qtr	\$8,400	\$7,560	\$10,422
Credential Attainment	68.0%	61.2%	66.7%
Measurable Skills Gain	31.0%	27.9%	87.1%
Youth			
	Negotiated Rate	90% of Negotiated Rate	Actual Rate
Employment 2nd Qtr	73.0%	65.7%	50.0%
Employment 4th Qtr	72.0%	64.8%	60.0%
Median Earnings 2nd Qtr	\$3,600	\$3,240	\$2,131
Credential Attainment	59.0%	53.1%	75.0%
Measurable Skills Gain	41.0%	36.9%	33.3%